

us, "To see ourselves as others see us" till it read "O wad that some Power some fairies or elves Would make others see us as we see ourselves."

S. N. I.

PONTIFICAL AIRS, FORSOOTH!

It is a long time since that spirit became extinct in the medical profession which prompted a physician to declare that he would rather err with Galen than accept the truth from Harvey. Yet to read some of the comments called forth by the libel action of Dr. Robert Bell against Dr. E. F. Bashford and the British Medical Association one might suppose that the physicians and surgeons of the present day ply their calling in measureless content with their achievements, and that they visit with the contumely of the self-sufficient any one who presumed to conduct them by his researches to truer views and better treatment of disease.

Dr. Bashford is General Superintendent of Research under the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. Dr. Bell is a legally qualified practitioner who, as stated by his counsel, was at one time Senior Physician to the Women's Hospital at Glasgow; having often operated for cancer and having invariably failed to cure by his operations he decided in 1894, "after years of experience," never to use the knife again. In place thereof he treats cancer by dietetic and hygienic measures, asserting in his publications that he can thereby cure it and easily prevent it. He has a theory that cancer is a blood disease and professes to be able to detect its presence in the blood by a microscopic examination. When these pretensions were censured by Dr. Bashford in an article in the British Medical Journal entitled "Cancer, Credulity and Quackery" Dr. Bell, feeling aggrieved at being "grouped with persons who were selling medicines and quack remedies of all kinds," charged Dr. Bashford with having libeled him, and the trial of the case before the Lord Chief Justice of England and a special jury resulted in a verdict for the plaintiff, with an award of two thousand pounds damages. It was not denied by their counsel that the defendants had called Dr. Bell a quack, in effect if not in so many words, so that the question for the jury was whether he is a quack or not, and deciding that he is not they marked their sense of the injustice of the charge by very heavy damages.

If a quack is, as the dictionary defines it, one who pretends to skill or knowledge which he does not possess, Dr. Bell is a quack, although perhaps of a mitigated variety. Unanimously medical men of wide experience and unimpeachable integrity—and men of this description testified to that effect at the trial—declare that cancer cannot be prevented or cured by such means as Dr. Bell employs. While admitting with due humility that surgery is inadequate to cope with the disease and offers but slight chances for a cure they deny that at present any other treatment offers any chance at all, and warn the sufferer from cancer who hearkens to the pretensions of Dr. Bell that

he risks his only opportunity. Strange to say, the result of this action was to make Dr. Bell appear to judge, jury, press and public as a martyr to the cause of research, as a representative of "honest orthodoxy" (to use the expression of one newspaper), as one who, in the legitimate pursuit of knowledge, has incurred the hostility of a majority insisting dogmatically on the acceptance of prevailing views. We are informed that the verdict was received with applause in court. The Lord Chief Justice remarked: "It would be a lamentable thing if any attempt or research to find a cure for this scourge should be checked by unjust criticism and comment." And the London "Times" in an editorial assures the medical profession that public sympathy is with Dr. Bell and taxes them with "too great a tendency to assume pontifical airs."

Needless to remark, these words imply a prodigious misconception of the spirit which impels medical investigators and the medical press to expose those whose boasts of therapeutic powers, whether prompted by vanity or rapacity, divert their victims from what *may* benefit them to what cannot possibly do so. These words reveal a distrust of properly constituted medical authority, which cannot fail to be obstructive to beneficent medical legislation and to influence altogether for the worse the relations between the profession and the public. It is incomprehensible why the Lord Chief Justice should see "unjust criticism and comment" in a protest against a menace to the public welfare. Probably a cancer on his judicial person would cause his Lordship to reverse himself.

SEX IN RELATION TO SOCIETY.*

Some few years ago Milliken ended an editorial wail of several hundred words with this last sigh: "But then, how few people ever really think!" For so many centuries the human mind has been cramped and restricted within the narrow limitations of the laws and "social customs" born of the innumerable man-made religions, that truly very few ever think. Of real thinkers, when one comes to a consideration of the problems presented in the title of the present work, three names present themselves: J. G. Frazer, Havelock Ellis and Forel. This is the last of a series of six volumes by Ellis and it contains the sanest, clearest and keenest presentation of facts and deductions therefrom that has been put into type. There is no rant; there is freedom of thought unrestricted by unscientific considerations of extraneous matters; there is a calm, judicial weighing of each problem presented; and the problems are huge. The Function of Chastity; The Problem of Sexual Abstinence; Prostitution; The Conquest of the Venereal Diseases; Sexual Morality; Marriage; The Art of Love; Science of Procreation; are these not indeed problems? Shall women forever pay with their lives for their ignorance of venereal diseases and for the silly

* Studies in the Psychology of Sex. Vol. VI. Sex in Relation to Society. By Havelock Ellis. Philadelphia, F. A. Davis Company. 642 pages. \$3.00.